FE Gold Charter

***Updated at 2nd May 2019 AGM***

**Introduction**

FE Gold is a brand owned by a collective of stud sheep breeders who possess the leading facial eczema tolerant sheep genetics in New Zealand. FE Gold as a group was established in 2012 but has no legal status. It levies its members an annual fee to promote the FE Gold brand and create awareness amongst commercial sheep farmers of the value of FE tolerant sheep genetics. This charter is not a legal document, but documents agreed procedures by the members on how FE Gold should be run and administered. Where possible it endeavors to adopt similar disciplines to that of an incorporated society, whilst not burdening FE Gold with legal liabilities and layers of bureaucracy that add unnecessary cost.

**Purpose of FE Gold**

***To produce a brand that protects the investment sheep breeders have made developing the FE tolerant gene pool while providing greater clarity to farmers and industry in regard to selecting FE tolerant rams.***

**Membership Criteria**

Must be a fully paid up member of FE Gold and meet the criteria laid out in the membership policy established by the Committee:

* *Testing with Sporidesmin at 0.60mg/kg*
* *At least 10 years of testing history*
* *10% of sale rams tested for facial eczema tolerance*
* *All rams used are Ramguard tested*
* *Provision exists for a ‘Best of Breed’ leading breeder in FE tolerance whose breed is not represented already amongst the membership to also be an FE Gold member, as they are unable to source better FE tolerant genetics within their breed*
* *Best of Breed must replicate the above criteria but at a minimum of 0.4mg dose level*

*The FE Gold steering committee will review and decide on all applications for membership. At their discretion will approve membership applications and any exceptions to the above rules, provided the purposes and brand integrity of FE Gold are maintained.*

If there is a simple technical change to the membership policy this needs to be ratified at the AGM by a simple majority or a Special General Meeting of members. Significant changes such as the inclusion of an FE Silver criteria is deemed a “Significant Change” requiring a 70% majority covered later in the charter. The Membership Policy will be displayed on the FE Gold website.

**Annual General Meeting**

* Timing is to occur within four months of the end of the financial year (currently 31st March). A 14-day notice period to members required.
* Business to be conducted/agenda
  + Chairman’s report
  + Report on finances
  + Ramguard Report
  + Present annual plan for the year with budget
  + Membership fees notified
  + Election of members
  + General Business
* The AGM Chair will be the Steering Committee Chair, or in their absence another Steering Committee member, who must be nominated and voted in place by the members at the AGM.
* Quorum is 10 paid up members who can be attending in person or electronically.
* Election of committee members to be carried out by a show of hands or secret ballot at the discretion of the AGM Chair. If the Chair is up for re-election as a committee member, they will hand the Chairmanship of the election process to another committee member.
* Nomination process can be done at the AGM by members attending.
* Resolutions can be passed at the AGM by a simple majority of FE Gold members. In the unlikely case of an even split the Chair may exercise a casting vote so the meeting can resolve a vote.
* Members not attending can appoint a member attending as their proxy, either instructing them how to vote or delegate their voting rights to the discretion of their appointed representative.
* A proxy doesn’t count towards a quorum.
* The Chair must be notified of proxies the day before the AGM.

**Special General Meetings**

In extraordinary circumstances a Special General Meeting (SGM) may be called by the Steering Committee or by written notice to the Chairman by 10 fully paid up FE Gold members.

**Significant Changes**

* Significant changes to FE Gold will require a 70% voting majority.
* Significant changes include a change to the Charter or membership criteria.
* In the case of “Significant Change” votes the Chair does not have a casting vote.

**Committee Members**

* Committee of 6, elected by members at an AGM, with 2 up for rotation each year.
* Chair elected annually by the Committee at the first meeting following the AGM, must be a paid-up FE Gold Member, can not be a Co-opted member
* Frequency of meetings no less than 2 x per year, electronically or in person
* Size of Committee – no less than 4 but a maximum of six elected members with allowance for an additional 2 co-opted members appointed by the Committee at the next meeting following the AGM.
* Co-opted members are appointed for a 2-year term which can be renewed. Their purpose is to broaden the skill set and perspectives of the Committee.
* The Steering Committee are not required to fill all the elected positions or Co-opted positions and can still operate with a vacancy of two elected positions if insufficient nominations are received at the AGM.

**Auditing of FE Gold Members**

Given FE Gold is a brand and provides an assurance to commercial sheep breeders as to the integrity of members breeding protocols, the Steering Committee will routinely audit members to provide assurance that the FE Gold membership criteria has been adhered to.

If a member is found to be non-compliant with the FE Gold rules, then they will be contacted by the Committee and asked to remedy the situation. If the situation can’t be resolved to the satisfaction of the Committee then the Committee reserve the right to retract the right of the member to use the FE Gold branding and collateral for that ram selling season. The member however must remain a financial member. If the situation persists then the Committee reserve the right to cancel the membership.

**Brand Protocols and use of FE Gold Logo’s**

The FE Gold brand protocols are to be determined by the Steering Committee and if changed will require consultation with members but not requiring an AGM Resolution. The Committee will keep an up to date Brand Protocol Policy on the FE Gold website.